

**Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Readiness Mechanism
Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) External Review Template**
(interim, January 12, 2011, from Program Document FMT 2009-1, Rev. 5)

Guidelines for Reviewers:

- 1) *FCPF REDD Country Participant R-PPs will be reviewed and assessed by the FCPF Participants Committee, the FCPF's governing body, taking TAP comments into account. External (Technical Advisory Panel or other) and Bank reviewers may provide recommendations on how a draft R-PP could be enhanced, using this template on a pilot basis until a process is approved by the PC.*
- 2) *One set of criteria should be used for review: specific standards each of the current 6 components of an R-PP should be met.*
- 3) *Your comments will be merged with other reviewer comments (without individual attribution) into a synthesis document that will be made public, in general, so bear this in mind when commenting.*
- 4) *Please provide thoughtful, fair assessment of the draft R-PP, in the form of actionable recommendations for the potential enhancement of the R-PP by the submitting country. A REDD Country Participant would be allowed three submissions of an R-PP to the PC for consideration.*

Objectives of a Readiness Preparation Proposal (condensed directly from Program Document FMT 2009-1, Rev. 3)

The purpose of the R-PP is to build and elaborate on the previous Readiness Plan Idea Note (R-PIN) or a country's relevant comparable work, to assist a country in laying out and organizing the steps needed to achieve 'Readiness' to undertake activities to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD), in the specific country context. The R-PP provides a framework for a country to set a clear roadmap, budget, and schedule to achieve REDD Readiness. The FCPF does not expect that the activities identified in the R-PP and its Terms of Reference (ToR) would actually occur at the R-PP stage, although countries may decide to begin pilot activities for which they have capacity and stakeholder support. Instead, the R-PP consists of a summary of the current policy and governance context, what study and other preparatory activities would occur under each major R-PP component, how they would be undertaken in the R-PP execution phase, and then a ToR or work plan for each component. The activities would generally be performed in the next, R-PP execution phase, not as part of the R-PP formulation process.

Synthesis Review of R-PP of Central African Republic

Reviewer : Stephen Cobb and three other TAP reviewers

Date of review : October 3, 2011

Standards to be Met by R-PP Components

(From Program Document FMT 2009-1, Rev. 5:)

Overview

This is a very evenly-balanced and thoroughly professional proposal and its authors, both national and international, are to be congratulated on the high standard they have achieved. Earlier this year the informal submission failed to get close to meeting the

standard on five of the twelve standards. On this final occasion in October 2011, the level of attainment has been raised from “partially meets” to “largely meets” in all of those five standards. Although this submission only meets two standards (2a and 4b) outright, the submission as a whole is now much closer to being of adequate standard. Many of the concerns raised in March and again in early September (about the consultation process and the institutional arrangements), have been addressed: not, perhaps, perfectly, but they have at least been attended to in direct response to our earlier comments.

The TAP is still not entirely convinced by the institutional arrangements that are proposed, though their balance has been improved in favor of non-government representation. There are still some concerns among TAP members about how well local voices will be heard; and also about how successful might be the proposals for managing REDD funds.

Another institutional worry that still remains is that reviewers felt that not enough weight was given to the shortcomings of the legal arrangements, and the steps needed to amend them, to clarify the rights to the future values of forests, forested land, trees and forest carbon. The R-PP does not advance this critical area far enough, though its description of the dilemma facing law-makers is crystal clear.

The technical aspects of the proposal are of a consistently high standard, with a logical link between analysis and proposed solutions (the links between the drivers of deforestation and the strategy options have been well thought through). The highly technical components 3 and 4, relating to the reference emission levels and the approach to MRV have been well treated: they face formidable challenges during implementation, due to the paucity of existing baseline data of adequate quality (notably in the 80% of the country covered by dry, semi-deciduous woodlands), and the chronic capacity constraints.

This last point exposes a worry expressed by all the TAP reviewers of CAR’s proposal. The international community wishes to assist CAR to make itself REDD-ready in step with other countries. The support given to CAR, through the technical assistance provided by ONFI, is a sign of this. Reviewers had felt that there needs to be more strategic thought given to a realistic and properly conducted training needs assessment and capacity-building plan, if CAR is to position itself to do more of this work on its own. This has received a fair measure of attention in this final revised submission, which reviewers note with satisfaction.

We previously commented on the poor quality of the maps, which do not appear to have improved.

A summary of our assessment is to be found in the table below, which shows the many improvements since March 2011 (the informal submission).

Summary of the attainment of standards

Standard	Status in TAP Review of Informal Submission in March 2011	Status in TAP Review of Revised Formal Submission in October 2011
1a: National Readiness Management Arrangements	<i>partially meets the standard</i>	<i>largely meets the standard</i>

1b: Information sharing and early dialogue	<i>partially meets the standard</i>	<i>largely meets the standard</i>
1c: Stakeholder Consultation and Participation	<i>partially meets the standard</i>	<i>largely meets the standard</i>
2.a: Assessment of Land Use, Forest Policy, and Governance	<i>Largely meets the standard</i>	<i>meets the standard</i>
2.b: REDD strategy Options	<i>partially meets the standard</i>	<i>largely meets the standard</i>
2.c: REDD implementation framework	<i>Largely meets the standard</i>	<i>largely meets the standard</i>
2.d: Assessment of social and environmental impacts	<i>Largely meets the standard</i>	<i>largely meets the standard</i>
3: Reference scenario	<i>Largely meets the standard</i>	<i>largely meets the standard</i>
4: Design a monitoring system:	<i>Largely meets the standard</i>	<i>largely meets the standard</i>
4a) Emissions and removals		
4b) Multiple benefits, other impacts & governance	<i>meets the standard</i>	<i>meets the standard</i>
5: Completeness of information & resource requirements	<i>partially meets the standard</i>	<i>largely meets the standard</i>
6: Design a Program Monitoring and Evaluation Framework	<i>largely meets the standard</i>	<i>largely meets the standard</i>

Component 1. Organize and Consult

Standard 1a: National Readiness Management Arrangements:

The cross-cutting nature of the design and workings of the national readiness management arrangements on REDD, in terms of including relevant stakeholders and key government agencies beyond the forestry department, commitment of other sectors in planning and implementation of REDD readiness. Capacity building activities are included in the work plan for each component where significant external technical expertise has been used in the R-PP development process.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

The revised version of the proposal addresses a number of points raised earlier, such as the number of representatives of various communities on the National REDD+ Committee. There has been a positive response to our earlier comments, so that civil society will play a more significant

role in the committee structure than before. TAP members still have concerns that the right voices may not be heard through the structures proposed, but the structures need not be set in stone, and this could be adjusted with experience. A clearer picture has been given about the relation, at the highest level, between the National REDD+ Committee and the National Environment and Sustainable Development Commission. More consultation is proposed (with key stakeholder groups), and there is a new organigram that shows how national arrangements are coming together. The budget has some changes internally, but the bottom line is the same.

This component largely meets the standard.

Standard 1b: Information Sharing and Early Dialogue with Key Stakeholder Groups:

The R-PP presents evidence of the government having undertaken an exercise to identify key stakeholders for REDD-plus, and commenced a credible national-scale information sharing and awareness raising campaign for key relevant stakeholders. The campaign's major objective is to establish an early dialogue on the REDD-plus concept and R-PP development process that sets the stage for the later consultation process during the implementation of the R-PP work plan. This effort needs to reach out, to the extent feasible at this stage, to networks and representatives of forest-dependent indigenous peoples and other forest dwellers and forest dependent communities, both at national and local level. The R-PP contains evidence that a reasonably broad range of key stakeholders has been identified, voices of vulnerable groups are beginning to be heard, and that a reasonable amount of time and effort has been invested to raise general awareness of the basic concepts and process of REDD-plus including the SESA.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

See below under 1c for comments

Standard 1c: Consultation and Participation Process

Ownership, transparency, and dissemination of the R-PP by the government and relevant stakeholders, and inclusiveness of effective and informed consultation and participation by relevant stakeholders, will be assessed by whether proposals and/ or documentation on the following are included in the R-PP (i) the consultation and participation process for R-PP development thus far³ (ii) the extent of ownership within government and national stakeholder community; (iii) the Consultation and Participation Plan for the R-PP implementation phase (iv) concerns expressed and recommendations of relevant stakeholders, and a process for their consideration, and/or expressions of their support for the R-PP; (v) and mechanisms for addressing grievances regarding consultation and participation in the REDD-plus process, and for conflict resolution and redress of grievances.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

Components 1b and 1c have been updated with results of a small series of additional workshops

³ Did the R-PP development, in particular the development of the ToR for the strategic environmental and social assessment and the Consultation and Participation Plan, include civil society, including forest dwellers and Indigenous Peoples representation? In this context the representative(s) will be determined in one of the following ways: (i) self-determined representative(s) meeting the following requirements: (a) selected through a participatory, consultative process; (b) having national coverage or networks; (c) previous experience working with the Government and UN system; (d) demonstrated experience serving as a representative, receiving input from, consulting with, and providing feedback to, a wide scope of civil society including Indigenous Peoples organizations; or (ii) Individual(s) recognized as legitimate representative(s) of a national network of civil society and/or Indigenous Peoples organizations (e.g., the GEF Small Grants National Steering Committee or National Forest Program Steering Committee).

held through June 2011, and show a plan through 2014. In fact this process was not as extensive as we would have hoped when we commented on it earlier this year: only three new workshops are reported on, and the representativity of marginal groups of forest-dwellers, is questionable. Nonetheless, the need for a wider consultation process was certainly taken on board during this period. The issue of representativity of the Prefectoral Commissions has been clarified, so that it is now clear that the composition of each is tailored to the local ecological, economic and demographic circumstances. The on-going activity and planning are both comprehensive here - as mentioned before, the real question will be how well the information and feedback from stakeholders is used in the continuing governance of the program. The final revised version goes to great lengths to underscore the influence that special interest groups will be accorded in shaping the future of the REDD+ programme. This issue serves to allay the fears of the TAP reviewers, who had earlier felt that there was too strong a didactic [instructional] tendency in the approach to consultation. This is partly achieved by the introduction of a new Table, which clarifies the conclusions reached in each of the workshops, and the steps to be taken as a consequence. A calendar of planned regional workshops, to be held in the early months of the next phase, also goes a long way to reassure the reviewer that the business of consultation is very much Work in Progress. The final version makes a clear and welcome admission of the capacity challenges that face CAR in the implementation of the REDD+ programme. It also clarifies a grievance procedure, which is also welcome, since of these there is bound to be a plentiful supply, as in other countries.

This component largely meets the standard.

Component 2. Prepare the REDD-plus Strategy

Standard 2a: Assessment of Land Use, Forest Law, Policy, and Governance:

A completed assessment is presented that: identifies major land use trends; assesses direct and indirect deforestation and degradation drivers in the most relevant sectors in the context of REDD-plus; recognizes major land tenure and natural resource rights and relevant governance issues; documents past successes and failures in implementing policies or measures for addressing drivers of deforestation and forest degradation; identifies significant gaps, challenges, and opportunities to address REDD; and sets the stage for development of the country's REDD strategy to directly address key land use change drivers.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

Opinions vary among the TAP reviewers on the quality of the analysis of the causes of deforestation and degradation. Some feel that there appears to be a good understanding of the underlying causes of deforestation and degradation: unsustainable agriculture, logging, infrastructure development, and inadequate policies and institutions to deal with the pressures. Others feel that the analysis is too soft and does not well enough pin-point the weaknesses of the systems of forest management and governance, nor of forest use related to land tenure. The assessment will have to show what the priorities are for dealing with the large number of issues that are raised, both directly and by omission. The final revision clarifies some of these points, adding helpful additional elements of precision to the understanding of how these interactions are to be better understood. Despite certain shortcomings mentioned above, TAP reviewers feel that the analysis is consistent with that produced by other countries, and that, to be consistent with them, enough analysis has been done at this stage.

This component meets the standard.

Standard 2.b: REDD-plus strategy Options:

The R-PP should include: an alignment of the proposed REDD-plus strategy with the identified drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and with existing national and sectoral strategies, and a summary of the emerging REDD-plus strategy to the extent known presently, and of proposed analytic work (and, optionally, ToR) for assessment of the various REDD-plus strategy options. This summary should state: how the country proposes to address deforestation and degradation drivers in the design of its REDD-plus strategy; a plan of how to estimate cost and benefits of the emerging REDD-plus strategy, including benefits in terms of rural livelihoods, biodiversity conservation and other developmental aspects; socioeconomic, political and institutional feasibility of the emerging REDD-plus strategy; consideration of environmental and social issues; major potential synergies or inconsistencies of country sector strategies in the forest, agriculture, transport, or other sectors with the envisioned REDD-plus strategy; and a plan of how to assess the risk of domestic leakage of greenhouse benefits. The assessments included in the R-PP eventually should result in an elaboration of a fuller, more complete and adequately vetted REDD-plus strategy over time.

Reviewer’s assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

As mentioned before, the four policy options that are listed are sensible parts of a REDD+ plan, but will need further development through the pilot projects. The overall presentation of the options is analytical and probing, containing some sense of the challenges of implementation, and their relative potential impact, that is methodologically refreshing. The relationship between potential pilot projects and the constraints of available sources of funding, will need to be carefully considered (it is uncertain, for example, that the pilot projects as proposed will be eligible for FCPF funding; since the FCPF is the only major donor to the REDD+ programme so far identified, this could be a major constraint to the successful implementation of the programme as a whole). A focus on conservation will be important. TAP reviewers acknowledge that the standard for the degree of development of the policy options at this stage of R-PP development is not very demanding; nonetheless, the discussions could well have been pursued in rather more detail. A welcome addition to the final revision of the document is a new programme element relating to capacity-building. In view of the fragility of national capacity referred to elsewhere in this review, this seems eminently sensible. It elevates that final quality of the proposal.

This component largely meets the standard.

Standard 2.c: REDD-plus implementation framework:

Describes activities (and optionally provides ToR in an annex) and a work plan to further elaborate institutional arrangements and issues relevant to REDD-plus in the country setting. Identifies key issues involved in REDD-plus implementation, and explores potential arrangements to address them; offers a work plan that seems likely to allow their full evaluation and adequate incorporation into the eventual Readiness Package. Key issues are likely to include: assessing land ownership and carbon rights for potential REDD-plus strategy activities and lands; addressing key governance concerns related to REDD-plus; and institutional arrangements needed to engage in and track REDD-plus activities and transactions.

Reviewer’s assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

CAR recognizes the need to undertake a number of legislative and regulatory reforms to address weaknesses in land use planning and governance in general. The revised proposal reports progress on the legal arrangements that are being set in train for the proposed REDD+ committee structure.

A particularly important aspect of the legal changes that need to be made is the reforms to land tenure and forest ownership/forest rights which must be addressed. These are fundamental to the potential success of REDD+. This is acknowledged in the text, though perhaps the enormity of the undertaking, at a legislative level, is understated. Nonetheless, CAR has offered a crystal clear expose of the debate about the ownership of forest carbon, describing the two extreme cases of “government owns all” and “the people own all”. How this will be resolved through the legislative process is not so clear. But the debate is out in the open, which is just as well. The discussion about finance mechanisms is rather limited in scope; but this can evolve as all concerned get more familiar with the issues.

These reforms will take time, and it will be important to start some of the processes immediately - notably the assessments and the reference level so that there is a knowledge base for governance discussions. With conservation a high priority, communities must be involved at all levels, and safeguards for them put in place at the outset.

This component largely meets the standard.

Standard 2.d: Social and Environmental Impacts during Readiness Preparation and REDD-plus Implementation:

The proposal includes a program of work for due diligence for strategic environmental and social impact assessment in compliance with the World Bank's or UN-REDD Programme's safeguard policies, including methods to evaluate how to address those impacts via studies, consultations, and specific mitigation measures aimed at preventing or minimizing adverse effects. For countries receiving funding via the World Bank, a simple work plan is presented for how the SESA process will be followed, and for preparation of the ESMF.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

CAR plans to conduct a SESA, and implement the ESMF in accordance with World Bank policies. The issues are listed and activities proposed. More thought has been given to the environmental issues involved, than the social. The authors are much clearer about the potential impacts, than how CAR might take steps to mitigate them.

The details of how all this will happen are limited to the chart of principal activities, sub-activities, and budgets. CAR needs to start now on developing a work flow plan to show how this all comes together and how safeguards will be addressed. There were no changes to this part of the proposal in its final version.

This component largely meets the standard.

Component 3. Develop a Reference Level

Standard 3: Reference Level:

Present work plan for how the reference level for deforestation, forest degradation (if desired), conservation, sustainable management of forest, and enhancement of carbon stocks will be developed. Include early ideas on a process for determining which approach and methods to use (e.g., forest cover change and GHG emissions based on historical trends, and/or projections into the future of historical trend data; combination of inventory and/or remote sensing, and/or GIS or modeling), major data requirements, and current capacity and capacity requirements. Assess linkages to components 2a (assessment of deforestation drivers), 2b (REDD-plus strategy activities), and 4 (MRV system design).

(FCPF and UN-REDD recognize that key international policy decisions may affect this component, so a stepwise approach may be useful. This component states what early activities are proposed.)

Reviewer’s assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

There has been no change in this component from the previous version. As before, TAP reviewers largely agree with the emphasis on strengthening human and logistical services in ICASEES, the agency in charge of statistics. Reviewers also agree with the combination of the bottom up and top down approaches to estimate national levels. Given the lack of economic models to draw from, it makes sense to try to develop and adapt the IIASA CongoBIOM model for this purpose. Also, given the low level of capacity, it is important to focus the limited resources where deforestation and degradation are expected to be high. This puts an immediate focus on area (i) CIP Sud, and area (ii) CIP Est, since these are both subject to illegal logging and other pressures. The proposal makes reference here, as elsewhere, to the need for close coordination with the FLEGT process; this can only be a good thing.

There still needs to be a detailed work plan with deliverables, timeline, and responsible parties identified. The R-PPs for Cambodia, Kenya, and Tanzania and the planning done in Uganda can all be drawn upon for help here in preparing a work plan and outcome chain.

Given that there has been no change in the final revised proposal from the previous proposals, we would continue to rate this component as:

This component largely meets the standard.

Component 4. Design a Monitoring System

Standard 4a: Emissions and Removals:

The R-PP provides a proposal and workplan for the initial design, on a stepwise basis, of an integrated monitoring system of measurement, reporting and verification of changes in deforestation and/or forest degradation, and forest enhancement activities. The system design should include early ideas on enhancing country capability (either within an integrated system, or in coordinated activities) to monitor emissions reductions and enhancement of forest carbon stocks, and to assess the impacts of the REDD-plus strategy in the forest sector.

The R-PP should describe major data requirements, capacity requirements, how transparency of the monitoring system and data will be addressed, early ideas on which methods to use, and how the system would engage participatory approaches to monitoring by forest-dependent indigenous peoples and other forest dwellers. It should also address independent monitoring and review, involving civil society and other stakeholders, and how findings would be fed back to improve REDD-plus implementation. The proposal should present early ideas on how the system could evolve into a mature REDD-plus monitoring system with the full set of capabilities.

(FCPF and UN-REDD recognize that key international policy decisions may affect this component, so a staged approach may be useful. The R-PP states what early activities are proposed.

Reviewer’s assessment of how well R-Plan meets this standard, and recommendations:

There has been no change in this component from the previous version, except for a new figure 38, which shows how the implementation of the MRV system will take place. This figure is a big improvement over the previous one which was hard to understand. As before, TAP reviewers note that in this component, as in the Reference Level component, CAR has identified most of the issues that need to be addressed, and has listed actions to be taken. Now this list needs to be turned into a work plan with deliverables, a time line, and responsible parties identified. The proposals for regional collaboration are extremely sensible. The plans developed by Cambodia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda are good examples of a framework that can be used. As noted in the reference level discussion, it will not be necessary for the national MRV to be started at equal levels of intensity in all regions of the country. Training is a key aspect of the proposal, and is correctly highlighted in the proposal - the sooner that this can start the better. Maximum reliance on regional programs will be necessary. The new figure 38 is helpful, but no other new information is provided in the final revision, so we would stick to the previous assessment:

This component largely meets the standard.

Standard 4b: Other Multiple Benefits, Impacts, and Governance:

The R-PP provides a proposal for the initial design and a workplan, including early ideas on capability (either within an integrated system, or in coordinated activities), for an integrated monitoring system that includes addressing other multiple benefits, impacts, and governance. Such benefits may include, e.g., rural livelihoods, conservation of biodiversity, key governance factors directly pertinent to REDD-plus implementation in the country.

(The FCPF and UN-REDD recognize that key international policy decisions may affect this component, so a staged approach may be useful. The R-PP states what early activities are proposed.)

Reviewer’s assessment of how well R-Plan meets this standard, and recommendations:

This is a good introduction to the issues, but still needs the specifics of monitoring system for environmental, socio-economic, and governance monitoring (though this last has been given least thought, TAP reviewers felt), with specific indicators and sub-activities identified. It needs to be developed around a work-plan, but we accept that that could follow. But in general a good start

has been made.

This component meets the standard.

Component 5. Schedule and Budget

Standard 5: Completeness of information and resource requirements

The R-PP proposes a full suite of activities to achieve REDD readiness, and identifies capacity building and financial resources needed to accomplish these activities. A budget and schedule for funding and technical support requested from the FCPF and/or UN-REDD, as well as from other international sources (e.g., bilateral assistance), are summarized by year and by potential donor. The information presented reflects the priorities in the R-PP, and is sufficient to meet the costs associated with REDD-plus readiness activities identified in the R-PP. Any gaps in funding, or sources of funding, are clearly noted.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

The R-PP had provided a list of activities needed to achieve REDD readiness, and has identified the large capacity building necessary. The budgets proposed generally seem reasonable - but as mentioned above, there needs to be at least a start on a work plan to show how these funds will be spent. The present table, though meticulous, does not really achieve this. Reviewers felt that the experience hitherto of consultation around the country indicates that a much larger budget would need to be allowed for this (consultation) in the programme. By comparison with other countries, the budgets have been developed to quite a fine level of detail.

As mentioned under Component 2b, that part of the budget accounts for 40% of the total, yet it is not certain that its proposed **pilot projects are** eligible for FCPF funding: this will need careful discussion with potential future project funders (FCPF and others).

There is a concern that CAR has not indicated whether or not its programme would be viable without other financial support; nor has it said enough about the status of its negotiations to secure other funding to fill the funding shortfall.

This component largely meets the standard.

Component 6. Design a Program Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Standard 6: The R-PP adequately describes the indicators that will be used to monitor program performance of the Readiness process and R-PP activities, and to identify in a timely manner any shortfalls in performance timing or quality. The R-PP demonstrates that the framework will assist in transparent management of financial and other resources, to meet the activity schedule.

Reviewer's assessment of how well R-PP meets this standard, and recommendations:

This is a good start on indicators, means of verification, and responsibilities. It now needs to be put into a framework that shows how the indicators would be used, for example to help achieve transparency, or to reveal shortfalls in performance timing or quality. There needs to be an argument that explains the purpose of monitoring the implementation of the programme, and which says how this will be used to keep its implementation on target. This component did not change for the final submission.

This component largely meets the standard.